



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

M Hudson July 2017-18

Introduction

Kew House School will take every step to ensure the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided for its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. See also Parents Charter for documentation.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- Parents should contact their son/daughter's personal tutor, the head of department or the member of staff concerned. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway (within 48 hours) by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the member of staff cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult their Head of Department (HoD) or a Deputy Head. Parents are encouraged to make initial contact via email or verbally and staff will usually respond with a 'phone call or appointment time.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, the Deputy Head or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant personal tutor unless the Head of Department, the Deputy Head or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. This will be determined by the nature of the complaint. Contact will be made within 24 hours from receipt of the initial complaint.
- The personal tutor/teacher/HoD will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved or in the event of the personal tutor and parent failing to reach a satisfactory resolution within ten working days*, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents should put the complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

- In all cases the Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five working days* of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parents will be notified of this decision in writing, within five working days of the initial meeting / conversation*. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Complaints Procedure.

Stage 3 – Complaints Panel

- Provision will be made for a hearing before a panel. The panel will be appointed within 5 working days of the complainant's request to proceed to Stage 3. The hearing will normally take place within a further 10 working days of the panel being appointed.
- At least three people who were not directly involved in previous consideration of the complaint will be appointed by the school's proprietors to sit on the panel. One of these panel members will be independent of the management and running of the school. Where possible the independent person appointed will hold / have held a position of responsibility comfortable with analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments. Mrs Dianne Barrett who has agreed to provide an impartial person.
- Parents will be invited to attend and be accompanied to a panel hearing if they wish.
- The panel will make findings and recommendations. The panel will ensure that the complainant, proprietors, Headmaster and, where relevant, the person complained about, are given written copies of these or receive them by electronic mail. The findings and recommendations will be given to the relevant parties within five working days following the hearing.
- The whole formal resolution process must not take longer than 21 working days*. This period would be measured from the initial request for formal resolution to the issuing of the panel's findings and recommendations.

*Should the complaint be received just prior to or during a school holiday the procedure will commence upon the start of term unless the complaint relates to a safeguarding issue where it will be managed as soon as possible.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- Written records will be kept of all complaints and their outcomes for three years, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, whether the complaint was submitted in writing or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.
- Parents are welcome to contact the school to request the number of formal complaints that there have been during the last three years.
- All correspondence, statements and records of complaints and their outcomes will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails. ISI may request records of all complaints made during a specified period and the actions taken as a result of each complaint.
- The school recognizes the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication. We acknowledge your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children whom you have placed in our care.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

- If you wish to make a complaint to the ISI about the school, you can write directly to:

Independent Schools Inspectorate,
CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London EC1A 9HA
Tel: 02076000100
or email Complaints@isi.net

You are advised that the ISI will rarely consider a complaint unless the school's formal complaints procedure has been followed fully prior to contacting them.

Complaints regarding the Headmaster

Formal and informal complaints regarding the Headmaster should be made to a member of the Board of Gardner Schools Group. The Board will request a full report from the Head and details of any correspondence in his possession that may relate to the matter. The Chairman or Managing Director may hold meetings with relevant staff and will, in most cases, meet or speak to the complainant. Once the facts of the complaint have been established the complainant will be informed of the Boards decision and the reasons for that decision in writing. The Boards decision is final. The whole formal resolution process must not take longer than 21 working days*. This period would be measured from the initial request for formal resolution to the issuing of the panel's findings and recommendations.

Contact details:

theo.brehony@gardnerschoolsgroup.com or maria.gardener@gardenergroupschools.com